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America

NATIONAL CATHOLIC WEEKLY REVIEW

Is the United Nations really "godless"?

ROBERT A. GRAHAM

Christian in name also

EDWARD F. KENRICK

Kierkegaard:
a Christian protest

RICHARD M. BRACKETT

EDITORIALS

Paris decision • Pope's message to China

Spanish marriages • *Porgy and Bess* in Titoland

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Chair of Unity Octave, 1955

All over the world Roman Catholics will join in prayer for religious unity during the Chair of Unity Octave, Jan. 18-25. This famous octave—from the feast of the Chair of St. Peter at Rome to that of the Conversion of St. Paul—was inaugurated in 1908 by Rev. Paul James Francis, S.A., convert-founder of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement. By 1921 this annual campaign of prayer, originated at Graymoor, Garrison, N. Y., had spread to every diocese of the United States. This year special services will be held each night during the octave at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D. C., and at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. In Rome, a Cardinal of the Roman Curia will officiate at night octave services in the Church of the Gesù, which will be attended by seminarians from 17 international colleges and religious communities in the Holy City. In a special message issued from Graymoor in connection with the octave, Rev. Titus Cranny, S.A., assistant director of the Chair of Unity Octave, stressed the fact that while study, labor and missionary effort are needed, prayer remains "the chief means to bring men to the unity of the Church." The Catholic Church, he said, does not seek unity for herself as other groups do. She has a God-given and invincible unity of faith, worship and government that no power on earth can overcome. She does not take part in ecumenical meetings like that held last August at Evanston, Ill. Her approach to the problem of unity is never by way of compromise or ecclesiastical "collective bargaining." The Church prays God to bring others into the unity which she already possesses.

Too old at 45?

Have you reached the age of 45? If so, you probably still think of yourself as fairly young. That's not how the hiring bosses look at it, though. If you are unfortunate enough to be on the hunt for a job, you may find that, like many another unemployed person in the prime of life, you are passed over because of "age." If that happened to only an occasional applicant for a job it would not be so bad. But it has become a national pattern. Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell, after studying the results of a year-long investigation of their problems, came out in a Dec. 21 statement for a new attitude toward the over-45-ers. Again, in a challenging article in the Jan. 7 *Collier's*, he sharply focused attention on their problems with the blunt title, "After 45—Are You Too Old to Work?" The number of persons 45 years and over is rapidly increasing. The Census Bureau puts the 1975 total at 63 million, 40 per cent more than in 1953. This group will comprise half the population over 20 years of age. According to Secretary Mitchell, if the present trends continue, an estimated half of our adult population will be condemned to a life of economic uselessness. Industry and labor unions must face this problem immediately. Industry will either employ the over-45 group or pay taxes to support them as nonworkers.

CURRENT COMMENT

People over 45 will form far too potent a political force to be merely brushed aside. Employers should discard the prejudice that the younger worker is necessarily the better, and hire for ability and skill without regard to age.

Mr. Bott leaves NLRB

With many practitioners of labor law, we regret the departure from Government service of the National Labor Relations Board's able general counsel, George J. Bott. During his tenure of this important office, which brought to a climax a twenty-year career in Government service, Mr. Bott was rarely in the news—rarely, that is, for a man holding one of the most controversial jobs in Washington. That in itself is some measure of the fairness and efficiency with which he discharged his functions. Perhaps because he was no headline hunter, Mr. Bott was able to win and hold the loyalty of his staff. This in turn helped him to develop a team spirit which paid big dividends to labor and management. Not the least of these were the advances made during his regime in the speed with which NLRB processes cases. To other capable and devoted public servants, it must have been discouraging to learn that George Bott was allowed to depart without a word of gratitude or commendation from his superiors. Less deserving men have left Washington with a treasured letter from the White House. Is it too late, one wonders, to repair what must surely have been an oversight?

Scientists in an "open windy world"

In an address remarkable for the poignancy of its expression and the profundity of its analysis of the contemporary world, Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, director of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, N. J., had some memorable things to say to a nation-wide radio audience on Dec. 26. The physicist's talk was the final event in Columbia University's year-long bicentennial celebration. Dr. Oppenheimer spoke with deep conviction on the subject of the loneliness and inadequacy of the scientist in modern times. Like other men, the scientist needs and craves a sense of community. But it is becoming more and more difficult for him to achieve this spiritual union with his fellows:

The frontiers of science are separated now by long years of study, by specialized vocabularies,

arts, techniques and knowledge from the common heritage even of a most civilized society; and anyone working at the frontier of such science is in that sense a very long way from home. . . .

The world which science reveals is a place of vast complexity and infinite diversity, criss-crossed by apparently divergent ways of life. Each of us, conscious of his own limitations, must cling to what is close to him—"to his friends and his tradition and his love, lest he be dissolved in a universal confusion and know nothing and love nothing." Ours is a "great open windy world," but we can still help one another because "we can love one another." Science, having wandered away from the tradition of the unity of all knowledge in God, appears to have lost even its sense of direction. Dr. Oppenheimer unwittingly testifies to man's eternal nostalgia for the love of God.

NPA's economic prescription

Committee rooms and the halls of Congress will shortly be echoing details of the National Planning Association's year-end report on the state of the economy. This is a private research group in which business, labor, agriculture and the professions are all represented. What it sees ahead is not a big slump but the persistence of sizable unemployment in conditions of relative prosperity. To achieve "reasonably full employment," NPA insists that national production must rise \$25 to \$30 billion above the 1954 level. Most economists would agree with that estimate. Differences arise when the question is posed how such an increase is to be achieved. In contrast with the policy of stressing private investment, which the Administration followed last year, NPA underlines the need of strengthening consumer buying power and upping government expenditures. It recommends tax cuts, "particularly those affecting consumption." It favors measures to encourage the buying and modernizing of homes, improving of farms and bettering of diets for low-income families. It would supplement private investment with public outlays for roads, schools and hospitals. NPA exhorts the private sector of the economy to do its part by raising wages and reducing prices "in accord with increases in productivity." The report concedes that production and earning power are "basically responsible for creating purchasing

power." But it insists that "production will rise only if producers have reason to expect that they will find a market for their product." Unless its economists furnish a persuasive rejoinder to the NPA thesis, the Administration is headed for trouble in the 84th Congress.

Church and State in Argentina

President Perón of Argentina once said that only a good Catholic could be a good *peronista*. In his current campaign against those priests and bishops who are, so he claims, attempting to undermine his regime, General Perón insists that he is "defending the doctrine of Christ." In the course of this "defense" the Perón forces have arrested at least ten priests, have pushed through an order aimed at the secularization of instruction in the public schools and passed a law legalizing divorce. This final act of legalizing divorce was tantamount to a declaration of war against the Catholic Church. The Vatican daily, *Osservatore Romano*, in a front-page editorial on Dec. 20 called this divorce law the "latest and gravest episode in a series of actions against the clergy, the Catholic people and the Church." Just what is behind Perón's recent tactics is not entirely clear. His regime shows certain signs of weakening. Inflation combined with a ceiling on wages has spelled lower living standards for the workers and a noticeable slackening of their loyalty to the Perón Government. Even before Perón's Nov. 10 blast at three bishops, whom he accused of "intrigue," *La Prensa*, the organ of the Peronist-sponsored Confederation of Labor, had been publishing accounts of the French "priest-workers" and denouncing their counterparts in Argentina. Perón had apparently already decided to make the Church the scapegoat as he tightened his labor controls and wooed the support of certain Socialist, Masonic and "liberal" groups traditionally opposed to the Catholic Church. A good Catholic can still be a good *peronista* only if he follows President Perón's new definition of a good Catholic.

Dulles to Captive Europe's spokesmen

Christmas brought, among other gifts, a much-needed word of encouragement for the exiled political leaders from the captive countries behind the Iron Curtain. Indirectly, at least, this brought a boost to the morale of their countrymen now under Communist oppression. On Dec. 22 a delegation representing nine Eastern European nations called at the State Department in order to present the resolutions reached at the Assembly of Captive European Nations, which had ended its sessions at New York the day before. The delegation did not see the Secretary of State personally but were given a message that was significant in that it was the first nod of recognition by the United States to the exiled group. Mr. Dulles wrote that he had observed "with interest" the thoughtful deliberations of the Assembly of Captive European Nations, which he said were "illustrative of the free world's

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just concern with the problems of the captive peoples." Americans, the Secretary declared, are deeply mindful of the plight of millions of our fellow men throughout the world who have been deprived of their freedom and independence but who have "steadfastly refused to surrender their minds and spirits to the dictates of tyranny." The United States cannot promise immediate relief to the exiled representatives of Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Esthonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Rumania. But Mr. Dulles' words of encouragement, they hope, presage more positive actions in the future.

Communist setback in Italian labor

Disappointing reports from Paris the past ten days, revealing France's indecisiveness, have been partially offset by good news from Rome. Not only did the Paris pacts hurdle the first obstacle in the Chamber of Deputies, but elections for shop stewards, which have been in progress all over Italy for two months now, revealed a clear anti-Communist trend. At the famous Fiat-Avio plant in Turin, the Communist-dominated General Confederation of Labor (CGIL) polled only 4 per cent of the total vote. At the Piaggio works in Pisa, the anti-Communist unions increased their share of the votes over last year by 19 per cent. That gave them, for the first time, control of the shop stewards' committee. At Italy's largest chemical works, the BPD plant at Colleferro (where over 5,000 workers voted), the Reds won only 24 per cent of the vote. In Naples, hitherto a Red stronghold, the anti-Communist unions jumped from 11 to 25 seats on the various shop stewards' committees and the CGIL dropped from 37 to 28 seats. In a dispatch to the Dec. 17, 1954 issue of the *AFL News-Reporter*, Syd Stogel, writing from Rome, summarized the results of the balloting in this way:

In those Red strongholds where free trade unions did not exist a year ago, they now have representatives for the first time, even though they so far are in the minority. In those factories where free labor was already represented, the democratic unions have sharply increased their strength and in countless cases have torn the majority away from the Communists.

The biggest gainer in the elections was the anti-Communist Confederation of Free Italian Unions (CISL), which our own AFL helped to found.

"No Red agitators in British Honduras"

We have been informed by two fellow Catholics, both in a position to know, that our inclusion of British Honduras among the colonial areas where Red agitators are "working openly" (AM. 11/27/54, p. 230) was an error. We based our statement on the report of a House subcommittee headed by Rep. Patrick J. Hillings (R., Calif.). The absence of communism in British Honduras is attributed in considerable measure to the work of St. John's College and its emphasis on social justice.

RED CONTROL LAW UPHELD

The U. S. Communist party lost another round Dec. 23 in its long fight against being compelled to register under the Internal Security Act of 1950 (the McCarran Act). On that day the U. S. Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia upheld the order of the Subversive Activities Control Board requiring the party to register as a "Communist-action organization," i.e., "an organization . . . substantially directed, dominated or controlled by the foreign government . . . controlling the world Communist movement." Judge E. Barrett Prettyman wrote the opinion, which was joined in by Judge John A. Danaher. The third judge, David I. Bazelon, dissented.

Registration would make the CP and its members subject to various restrictions and penalties. (AM. 8/12/50, pp. 488-90; 10/7/50, pp. 9-11).

The party attacked the order of the board and the act of 1950 chiefly on the grounds that they constituted an infringement of the freedom of speech guaranteed by the First Amendment and of the due process and privilege against self-incrimination guaranteed by the Fifth.

In discussing the first contention, the court rejected the party's effort "to cast the entire controversy over communism into the form of an ideological or philosophical difference of opinion." It refused to treat the world Communist movement "as a dialectic debate." The party's program "is a program of action; it involves the Government. It can be met with action by the Government."

According to the party, to subject its members to the restrictions and penalties of the act merely because they were party members would be to condemn them without "due process of law." The court pointed out, however, that the sanctions did not apply until a member had notice of the registration of the party as a Communist-action organization, and therefore had full notice of its subversive purposes and activities. To continue membership in these circumstances would be to support the activities of the party.

As regards the self-incrimination clause of the Fifth Amendment, the court held that the privilege enshrined there was a personal privilege and had to be explicitly claimed by the person invoking it. The registration order of the Subversive Activities Control Board was addressed to an organization, the Communist party. The act of 1950 and the order of SACB could not be held invalid because of the possibility that the person or persons making the registration for the party might have to claim the privilege against self-incrimination.

In his dissent, Judge Bazelon rejected the reasoning of his colleagues on the Fifth Amendment privilege. He pointed out that the conviction of the Communist leaders in 1949 under the Smith Act established the party as a conspiracy. It was unrealistic to apply to it the reasoning one might apply to an ordinary corporation or labor union. The registrants would be *ipso facto* admitting a conspiracy.

C. K.

WASHINGTON FRONT

Among the biggest headaches for the Administration—perhaps the biggest headache—is what to do with our ever growing food surpluses. It is ironical that the present Administration came into power in 1953 with the promise to “do something” about this problem, and that the new Secretary of Agriculture, Ezra Taft Benson, had a ready-made plan of what to do; yet the fact is that the amount of foodstuffs taken off the market and stored away has risen steadily over the past two years.

The figures, as given out by Agriculture, are sufficiently startling. We have, for instance, in storage, by purchase or loan, over 900 million pounds of perishable dairy products, and in addition enough cottonseed oil to make more margarine than we have butter. We have 1.2 billion bushels of wheat and corn, millions of bales of cotton and tobacco, among other commodities. The cost of this is rapidly rising toward \$8 billion, and it costs \$700,000 a day (repeat: a day) to store it.

Official Washington thinks this is a menace to our economy. It has two plans to reduce the surpluses: one administrative and one legislative. It has reduced acreage where it can under the law, and it gives away or sells what the market will stand. It also wants price supports lowered below the present rigid 90 per cent of parity between what the farmer gets and what he buys. This, it hopes, will discourage farmers from producing “for Government storage,” as Mr. Benson puts it, “and not for people’s stomachs.” To the argument that we ought to have in storage enough to tide us over bad years, he answers: “Yes, of course; but this thing has got out of hand. We are going way beyond any foreseeable needs.” And the surpluses stored keep rising.

What is a surplus? Not too long ago, I was in a semi-official capacity at a breakfast of farm leaders and experts. I asked that embarrassing question, and got as many answers as there were men there. But all came to this: a surplus is all above what *this nation* can consume at its present income without depressing the market for foodstuffs and fibers. This excess must be taken off the market to maintain prices.

Mr. Benson disputes this theory, but his difficulty is both legislative and moral: legislative, because the Democrats, now in power, won’t listen to him; and moral, because with hundreds of millions of people abroad near starvation, this wealthy nation keeps its surplus food out of circulation. It is basically a test of capitalism, with its concept of “the market.” We can’t give too much away abroad without “dumping” and thus destroying local markets. If we can solve that, all might be well for us and the others.

WILFRID PARSONS

UNDERSCORINGS

► The U. S. State Department has announced a curtailment of its German high-school program of student exchange, described in our issue of May 29, 1954 (pp. 234 and 246-7). Last year 200 German high-school students came to spend a year with American families; only 150 will come next year. NCWC sponsored about 30 of those who came last year, and placed them in Catholic homes.

► Charles Lucey, Scripps-Howard Washington correspondent, who writes “Washington Front” for AMERICA during the summer months, will write a weekly editorial column for NC News Service, beginning the week of Jan. 10. An NC release of Dec. 27 noted that after the death of Gretta Palmer, the service “had no editorial column by a lay Catholic who had already achieved distinction in the secular field.” Mr. Lucey was offered the post because he has “wide experience, knowledge of what is happening in the world and . . . as a Catholic could discuss events from a Catholic angle and present these facts in an interesting and informative manner.”

► The Dec. 10 issue of the *Commonweal* carried an announcement of the resignation of John Cogley from the staff of the magazine. During five years as Executive Editor, Mr. Cogley did much to achieve the “greatest strides editorially and circulation-wise of the past twenty years.” We join the *Commonweal* in regretting the departure of an able practitioner from the field of Catholic journalism.

► Honeymoon couples who stay at Strickland’s Mountain Inn, Mt. Pocono, Pa., find in their rooms a handsome card folder containing thoughts and prayers for the newly married. The card was prepared by local Catholic, Protestant and Jewish clergy. Mr. Strickland, whose inn caters especially to honeymooners, had the card made up “in the belief that a reminder of religious realities is helpful and welcome to most of the guests at such a time.”

► In connection with the article, “Christian in name also,” on pp. 377-79 of this issue, we may draw attention to a 10-page pamphlet, *The Office of Sponsors*, by Mrs. W. F. Rohman. It discusses baptismal names and customs and the duties of godparents (Family Life Bureau, NCWC, 1312 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington 5, D. C. \$1 per 100).

► *Promised in Christ*, a 56-page booklet on solemn betrothal, has just been published by Grailville, Loveland, Ohio. Besides giving a form of ceremony proper to a betrothal, the booklet also describes the “crowning of the bride” on the eve of her wedding, and suggests appropriate Scripture readings and prayers for the occasion. The “crowning,” a custom traditional in many Catholic countries, is becoming increasingly popular here C. K.

Paris Decision

Minutes before our deadline last Thursday, the French National Assembly obligingly made the decision to approve the Western European Union and the incorporation of 500,000 German soldiers into the free world's defense system. The margin of votes in favor was a slim one, reflecting the misgivings that linger in the heart of all Frenchmen who have been asked to approve formally the reconstitution of the military strength of a neighbor from whom France has suffered so much in the long past. Previously the Assembly had approved the entry of the German Federal Republic into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

France's allies will not soon forget the anxiety of these recent days, as it seemed that a kind of irresponsibility had seized the lawmakers elected by the people of France to represent them and to advance the cause of France. This spectacle of parliamentary unpredictability has provided a jolt that will weigh heavily in the councils of France's associates in the future. It has seriously undermined the confidence of the rest of the free world as to the present capacity of France to deal adequately with its own foreign interests, let alone the interests of its allies.

Perhaps the coming months will show, however, that this harsh judgment, the product of annoyance and impatience in Bonn, Washington and London, will be tempered by a closer study of what was really at the bottom of the extraordinary performance of the Assembly, beginning with its Christmas Eve rejection, later reversed, of German rearmament. The conduct of the Popular Republican Movement, for instance, calls for clarification. There are reasons to suppose that their vote against German rearmament in the Western European Union, when they were expected only to abstain, was motivated by anger at Premier Mendès-France, whom they held responsible for killing the European Defense Community. While not intending to defeat the Western European Union, they perhaps outsmarted themselves in shaving the margin of the Premier's majority a little too close for comfort. It is one of the regrettable, even lamentable, things in contemporary French parliamentary life that such maneuvers take place on issues of vital importance.

Yet the MRP is now in the position to say that the old program of European integration on supranational principles has at least as wide support among Frenchmen as the *Plan Mendès-France*, probably more. By its maneuvers the MRP has effectively demonstrated that the substitute for EDC has only the minimum backing of the French people. They hope to argue in the near future that the integration of Europe on supranational principles still represents the true mind of the French nation. For the outside world these proceedings seem quite extraordinary, even irresponsible, and we hope they will not be repeated.

EDITORIALS

The December 30 action of the National Assembly remains, for all that, an important date in the history of postwar Europe. It has resulted in confirming the strength of the Atlantic alliance, just as a negative vote would have had catastrophic consequences for that alliance and might have produced in the end a radical and dangerous realignment of forces in Europe and the world. While some question may remain as to the exact military value of the Western European Union, the over-all result for the morale of the free world should not be underestimated.

True, a few hurdles must still be surmounted before the Western Union is a reality. The French upper chamber has yet to act; and Chancellor Adenauer may face constitutional challenges before Bonn ratifies the pacts. But it was heartening to have the French Assembly officially recognize that the real danger today comes not from a Germany linked to the West, but from Communist Russia.

Spanish marriages

The excitement kicked up over a reported agreement negotiated by our military authorities with the Spanish Government on the subject of marriages should cause no small wonder to any objective observer. The United States now has military installations in forty-nine countries. In each instance complicated formal arrangements have been necessary in order to establish in clear and satisfactory terms the exact legal status of our mission and its personnel. As guests in states which have voluntarily (with the help of nudges on our part) invited us to set up bases on their sovereign territory, we find ourselves in a variety of situations. Some of these touch the domain of religion. In Norway, the banns of marriages of Catholics must be published in the Lutheran Church. In Saudi Arabia no Christian marriages may be performed at all. We wonder if a Jewish military chaplain is even allowed on the soil of the late redoubtable Ibn Saud, let alone allowed to perform a legally valid marriage.

Up to now no complaints have been heard that these arrangements have in any way infringed upon the religious rights of our American personnel. But a single Christmas Day dispatch to the *New York Times* from Madrid was enough to set headline-hunting clerics on the prowl and to provoke hurried, timid conferences in the State and Defense Departments. For in this case not Moslem Arabia or Lutheran Norway but Catholic Spain is in question. The military

authorities may with impunity adapt themselves to the requirements of the laws of Saudi Arabia and Norway, but they seem to risk a bundle of headaches when they attempt the same thing in regard to Catholic Spain.

Present Spanish civil law does not recognize the legal validity of any marriage involving a Catholic which is not in conformity with the prescriptions of canon law. This situation does not exist in the United States, where a Catholic who chooses to defy the Church's regulations can enter into a purely civil marriage and have his marriage recognized as legal by the state. The reported agreements with Spain are still unsigned. The texts of these agreements have not been published. They apparently provide that military chaplains should not perform any marriages which, while they may be valid in the United States, would not be recognized in Spain.

It should be noted that marriages between non-Catholic Americans are in no way impeded by the proposed agreement. It affects only Catholic parties.

We confess that we fail to find anything objectionable in such an agreement. Our Government has the obligation of assuring that the marriages contracted by our military or civilian personnel with citizens of the host country will enjoy full validity before their civil law. Among other issues, the legitimacy of the children is involved. If we have conformed ourselves to the laws of other countries, there seems no consistent reason why we should now insist on making an exception in dealing with Spain.

Military commanders have always had the power to forbid the marriages of those under their command while on foreign duty. We even venture to suggest that it would be a bad thing for the mission which we have to accomplish in Spain if our military chaplains were allowed to perform marriages which are doubly offensive to Spaniards, as being in implicit contempt of both the civil laws and the religious traditions of the host country.

Pope's message to China

In today's China the Catholic layman is proving himself a worthy successor to the early Christian martyr. The object of incessant propaganda, constantly urged to denounce his clergy and forced to attend Communist study circles, he must accept Marxism or suffer the consequences. Many of China's Catholics are showing themselves willing to accept those consequences, whatever they may be. Some, however, have fallen victim to an insidious attempt to lead them, under the guise of patriotism, into schism. To these in particular Pope Pius XII has addressed his most recent encyclical, *Ad Sinarum Gentem*, the second to the people of China in three years.

While the attack on the Chinese Church may have little of the bloody characteristics of the early Christian persecutions, it is none the less diabolical. Playing on the traditional Chinese respect for civil author-

ity in spheres of public life, it aims at setting up a national Chinese Church independent of the See of Peter. It is almost as though the Red rulers in Peiping had learned their scriptural lessons well. Cut off from the vine, the branch can only wither and die.

Like all movements instigated by Communist regimes, the attack on the Church in China also has its symbolic slogan. The aim of the Communist Government is to establish a Church having the so-called "three autonomies"—self-rule, self-support and self-propagation.

With that ultimate purpose, as Pope Pius implies in his encyclical, the Church can have no quarrel, for the slogan sets out the very object of the missions themselves. Indeed, His Holiness reminds the people of China that his predecessor consecrated the first six Chinese bishops in St. Peter's Basilica. He himself raised the first Chinese prelate to the College of Cardinals. Moreover, he hopes and prays for the day when the Church in China will be able to dispense with the foreign missionary and financial support Christian charity demands be given the nascent Chinese Church. But even in that day, the Pope emphasizes, "[the Chinese] Christian community . . . must be completely in submission to the Sovereign Pontiff . . . and closely united with him in what concerns religious faith and morals."

Such submission in matters of faith and morals in no way vitiates the Christian virtue of patriotism. In fact, as the Pope adds, Chinese Catholics have reason to be "second to none in their ardent love and loyalty to their noble country." Moreover, His Holiness urges them to be "ready to fulfil all their duties as citizens."

In a land where conflict between loyalty to Church and loyalty to State is undreamed of by Catholics, the admonition of the Holy Father would seem pointless. That he was forced to raise the issue with regard to China should convince us of the ordeal through which the Mystical Body is passing in that unhappy country. The least we can do is join the Holy Father in prayer that our fellow Catholics will emulate one another in the courage and fortitude with which they meet the onslaught of the persecutor.

Porgy and Bess in Titoland

When the cast of seventy American Negroes took twenty curtain calls on December 21, at the end of a one-week's run of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* in Yugoslavia's Belgrade, they had every reason to be proud of the job they had done and, according to all reports, we at home have every reason to be proud of the excellent ambassadorship they exercised. Their artistic abilities had received rave reviews and, even more impressive, their off-stage conduct was marked by a humility and a friendliness that won all hearts.

The play itself shows how a mature democracy is at ease enough to be able to enjoy some good laughs at itself. One Yugoslav Government official reportedly observed: "Only a psychologically mature people

could have placed [such a show] on the stage." Add to all this the fact that most Yugoslavs had never seen Negroes before and one begins to see the tremendous impact this cultural hands-across-the-sea venture had. If all Yugoslavia is now singing songs from the play, as one account states, Tito's country will be remembering that it first heard those songs from the lips of Negro artists who are proud of American democracy and eager to export it in this graceful fashion.

This venture raises a deeper question. Negro artists and entertainers of this caliber can well be the most effective of good-will ambassadors, especially to the colored peoples of the world. The death of segregation here at home is written in the books, though some States are threatening to close the public-school system rather than integrate. But a more concrete realization of what is actually taking place in this country would be brought home to free peoples—India, for example—if a widespread program could be worked out to keep teams of American Negro artists constantly on the road abroad. What an impression a Marian Anderson, with her marvelous voice and deep religious feeling, would make as an international cultural envoy.

We have come a long way since the day when almost the only American Negro artist known abroad was Paul Robeson, who spoke for only a very minute fraction of his race. Our Negro representatives are more and more showing to the world today that they are proud of their country and that their country is proud of them.

When the *Porgy and Bess* cast joined with the entire audience in Belgrade to wind up the engagement by singing "Auld Lang Syne," everyone knew that they had seen democracy truly in action. Two years ago (cf. AM. 10/4/52, p. 3), West Berlin and Vienna accorded the same ecstatic reception to the same opera and to largely the same Negro cast. Our comment then, that "the State Department ought to give serious thought about doing more of the same," has been underscored by this recent Yugoslavian triumph.

Professional secrets

Should a doctor who knows that an engineer of a passenger train is subject to epileptic seizures inform the railway authorities, if the engineer himself refuses to do so? A group of doctors and laymen who were asked that question by Dr. Ernest C. Dawson, president of the Derby Medical Society in England, answered by almost 7 to 1 that the doctor should notify the proper authorities.

Many other questions and answers reported by Dr. Dawson in a recent issue of the *British Medical Journal* similarly centered around the obligation of professional secrecy. Suppose a doctor learns the identity of a professional abortionist through one of his women patients. Should he report him to the police even though his patient objects? In this case the doctors were 51 to 47 in favor of reporting. Should a worker

getting benefits or a pension under false pretenses be exposed by his doctor? Here the tally showed that 34 doctors would report him while 64 would not. Would a doctor be right in reporting to police that he had seen stolen jewelry in the room of one of his patients? He would be obliged, said 34 doctors; he would not, said 64 others.

After making a point of this diversity of opinion, Dr. Dawson urged the British Medical Association to reconsider its present position on professional secrecy which aimed "to impose a rule of absolute secrecy regardless of consequences . . ."

What Catholic moral theology has to say on this important matter of professional secrecy is quite clear in principle, though there is room for difference of opinion in the application of principle to difficult individual cases. Professional secrets fall under the general category known as "entrusted" or "committed" secrets. An implied agreement exists between the professional man and his client that secrets disclosed or discovered in the course of interviews will not be revealed.

By their very office the doctor, the lawyer or the social worker invite the confidences of their clients. Entirely apart from the possible grave injustice to the individual client, the professional person who is careless with such entrusted secrets can do grave injury to the common good. Public confidence could not long survive widespread loose talk in professional circles.

At times, however, the requirements of the common good or the good of some individual may justify the revealing of a secret. The epileptic engineer mentioned above would seem to be placing the lives of thousands of travelers in constant danger of sudden death. If that were true, a doctor knowing professionally about his condition would be justified in revealing the secret to the proper authorities.

Injury to the professional secret-bearer himself, or to an innocent third party, threatened with serious injury by an unjust act of the person whose secret is involved, could also justify divulging the secret. In all cases, however, there should be a real proportion between the harm evaded in revealing the secret and the possible harm done by its revelation.

Applications of the moral norms governing professional secrecy are not always easy. There are two excellent treatises on the subject in English: *Professional Secrecy in the Light of Moral Principles*, by Rev. Robert Regan, O.S.A. (Washington, 1943) and *The Professional Secret in Social Work*, by Rev. Walter McGuinn, S.J. (Boston, 1938). These works show that the moral guide-lines are clear even though the facts of a given case may make decisions difficult.

Dr. Dawson is right, then, in urging the BMA to reconsider a position that admits of no exceptions in professional secrecy. Yet it is important to add that only acknowledged moral principles strictly limiting these exceptions can protect individual rights and public confidence in the professions.

Is the United Nations really "godless"?

Robert A. Graham

RELIGIOUS FANATICS turn up at the United Nations headquarters in New York at all times of the year, but especially during the General Assembly. Most of them seem sure that the UN is "godless." One of the repeaters is a lady with crucifixes sewn on her clothes who cries out, "Let God in there!" Another is the man who specializes in leaving medals at various places in the Assembly building where the public has access. The more boisterous ones, of course, are ejected by the security guards. This treatment undoubtedly convinces the zealots that God is indeed not wanted at the United Nations.

The idea that the United Nations is somehow "godless" appears to be shared by others than fanatics, however, to judge from certain statements by high UN officials. In his address at Evanston last August 21 to the World Council of Churches, UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld recalled as a typical incident how, in a television interview, a teen-ager asked him "with concern" why there is no reference to God in the UN Charter. In Toledo last summer, Nobel prize winner and UN official Dr. Ralph Bunche thought it necessary to assure an audience that in the organization those who do not believe in God are considered "mavericks" and hence not truly representative of the UN personnel.

There is a bit of mystery in the fact that this particular kind of criticism is reserved especially to the world peace organization. Other institutions in our contemporary secularized society deserve it more. In its beginnings and in its operation the United Nations has not evidenced systematic hostility or even indifference to the cause of religion. This was true even in the first phases, when the Soviet bloc at the United Nations had not yet been driven into its present isolation. During the drafting negotiations at San Francisco in 1945 there were no incidents indicative of hostility to religion on the part of the delegates as a whole. The representations of religious groups were welcomed and were not ineffective.

The San Francisco meeting was opened on April 25 by the then U. S. Secretary of State, Edward R. Stettinius Jr. As chairman he called for a "minute of silent meditation." The present rules of procedure for the General Assembly are more specific. Rule 64 orders that at the first plenary meeting of each session

Fr. Graham, AMERICA associate editor, followed for our readers the San Francisco Conference which drafted the UN Charter in April-June 1945. He was present in London on Jan. 10, 1946 for the first meeting of the General Assembly. Since that time he has been an accredited correspondent for this Review to meetings of the Assembly or other UN organs in New York and Paris.

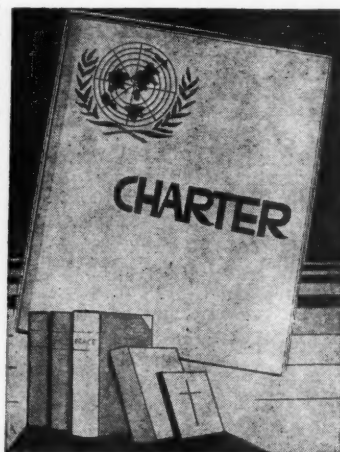
of that body the President "shall invite the representatives to observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation." The closing meeting of the Assembly is likewise featured by this minute of silence. This measure was suggested by Brig. Gen. Carlos P. Romulo, representative of the Philippines. It is a practical solution to the problem of common prayer among such a variety of nationalities and religions as is represented in the Assembly. For several years now there has been a "meditation room"

set apart in the UN building. The conception embodied in this "chapel" may not be wholly satisfactory to Catholics, but the decision to establish it within the organization's precincts certainly does not reflect indifference to religion.

Religious ceremonies on the margin of the United Nations are not lacking. Each year, for instance, the Archbishop of New York, Francis Cardinal Spellman, invites the members of the various delegations to the General Assembly to assist at a solemn pontifical Mass in St. Patrick's Cathedral. This function is always well-attended. Even the avowedly atheist Andrei Vishinsky was present on occasion. When the Assembly met at Paris in 1948 a similar ceremony was held at Notre Dame. The Soviet delegation on that occasion was represented by Moscow's Ambassador to Paris, Alexander Bogomolov.

Not only have the governments willingly participated in these religious affairs, but some of them have invited priests to be members of their delegations. In 1954, for instance, The Netherlands, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic each named a priest as a delegate to the UN. Rev. Jerome D'Souza, S.J., was a delegate of India for several years. A few years ago a bishop, Most Rev. Eris O'Brien, now Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn, accompanied the Australian delegation as consultant. It should be added that a priest has for several years now been a member of the UN Secretariat. The precedent for this, if precedent was needed, was furnished by the International Labor Office, which has had a priest on its staff practically ever since it was first set up in 1919.

So much for the Assembly. As for the Security Council, this body has never met on Good Friday, out of respect for the religious beliefs of its Christian members. The precedent for this was set in 1946 when



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the Council was still meeting at Hunter College in the Bronx, New York City. Though that body was then wrestling with the Iranian and the Franco issues (Gromyko had taken his famous "walk" on March 27, but had returned), the sentiment of the representatives, particularly among the Latin-American diplomats, led to cancellation of the meeting that would ordinarily have taken place on April 19, Good Friday of that year.

The policy of the UN Secretariat follows suit. Though there are no written regulations on the subject, the understanding and practice has always been that personnel may have whatever time off they need to fulfil their religious duties. This extends even to occasions where no formal obligation exists.

So much for the credit side. But the United Nations is not immune from the ideological storms that buffet humanity today. The forces of religious hostility or agnosticism are numerous and powerful.

On the debit side should be reckoned the failure to get the name of God mentioned in the UN Declaration of Human Rights. In 1948 the UN General Assembly, meeting that year in Paris, was putting the final touches on this important manifesto of freedom. The Netherlands delegation proposed that the declaration should clearly enunciate that human rights are based "on man's divine origin and immortal destiny." It soon appeared, however, that many delegations preferred not to take any position for or against the proposal. The amendment was therefore not pressed to a vote, for fear that it might win (or lose) by a small vote while the great majority stood aloof.

Was this episode evidence of studied hostility to religion on the part of the United Nations? Rev. L. J. C. Beaufort, O.F.M., veteran representative of The Netherlands Government on UN bodies, has testified in the January, 1954 *Catholic World* that the truth it was proposed clearly to enunciate was not denied. A false sense of tolerance, he said, made many delegates hesitant. Father Beaufort speaks with direct and personal knowledge, having been closely involved in the canvassing of opinion among the various delegations.

The episode, Father Beaufort rightly says, was deplorable. But he will not agree that it proves the United Nations to be godless. In this he is supported by the example of the Holy See itself. A few months later, taking part in the 1949 diplomatic conference at Geneva for the revision of the Red Cross conventions on prisoners of war, the Holy See met with a like failure. The delegation of the Holy See, headed by the late Archbishop Philip Bernardini, then Nuncio to Switzerland, vainly sought to introduce a similar amendment to the preamble of the conventions. This writer has elsewhere given an account of the episode ("The Vatican's role in international law," *AM.* 9/30/50).

In spite of the rebuff, the Holy See signed and ratified the documents without any indication that it considered the whole conference godless and its conventions fatally compromised. The reason for this

attitude is quite simple. The articles of the Red Cross conventions contain many significant provisions which in substance do far more for the cause of religion than any purely verbal mention.

In the UN Human Rights Declaration, the presence or absence of the name of God is not a fair criterion of its godliness or godlessness. As is the case with the Red Cross conventions, its true significance is to be read rather in its substantive provisions and in the spirit that pervades the whole text. That spirit is especially evidenced in the practical carrying out of the declaration's ideals. In view of the practical effect of the declaration, particularly in the field of education and parents' rights, few Catholics close to UN affairs would say that the Human Rights Declaration is godless. This document has been cited to support godly causes across the free world from Bonn in Germany to Vancouver in British Columbia.

The modern secularist is content to let the forces of religion seek and secure certain harmless and superficial advantages which operate as a sop to public opinion, provided he can remain in control of the substance of contemporary life. The real norm for deciding whether the United Nations is godless or not must not be any purely formal signs of either religiosity or irreligiosity. The test should be the practical impact of the organization on the affairs of men.

The United Nations is now called upon to undertake projects of great significance in the economic, social and political fields. It is essential that Christian influences, the same that have proved so salutary to civilization in times past, should be present in the UN and be brought to bear upon its operations. The door is not closed to these influences. The many Catholic and other religious international organizations now cooperating with the United Nations can testify to this from their own experience. They have entered through its open door, and the world and the United Nations are better for it.

Christian in name also

Edward F. Kenrick

"SURE, WHAT IN THE NAME OF GOD are you doing, calling the child after a nut?" exploded the godparent, discovering at the font that his charge was to be named "Hazel." Today, there's too much naming after vegetable, animal and mineral. A names division could be added to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Today, it seems, more and more

Fr. Kenrick, teacher of history at Cardinal Hayes High School, New York City, writes from time to time for Catholic periodicals.

dogs go around with Christian names and more and more Christians with dogs' names.

Reading your newspapers carefully, you can discover that names such as Dudley, Debbie, Crystal, Duke, Coral, Clive, Darryl (to draw on only two letters of the alphabet) are on the increase. Events have been utilized, e.g., "Pearl Harbor," a name the girl won't relish as time goes by. So have the elements, as a family of eight answer to Winter, Snow, Frost, Hail, Icy, Rain, June and Day. Parents seem willing to stay up nights straining ingenuity to deprive the child of that expected, normal blessing, a Christian name.

It's not Papa who pays. Papa doesn't have to go through sixty-five years or so of responding to a name like, let us say, "Eucalyptus." If Papa simply must create such titles, he could at least compromise. The first name ought to be Christian, say "Peter;" "Eucalyptus" might be inserted afterwards. In that way Peter can get through this vale of tears, other things being equal, as a recognizable Christian. By the same token, it can be Papa's delight that hidden away in the initials is his own masterpiece. In the privacy of home, Papa might occasionally refer to "Eucalyptus"; one of those little secrets that knit families together, perhaps in self-defense.

Perhaps it's hardly worth mentioning, but a Christian name, being traditional, is spellable. This may seem a small thing, but the normal child does appreciate having a name he can spell. It's sad to see an otherwise quite decent chap going through life misspelling his own name; teachers testify it does happen. Take a good look at your new-born infant. If the creased, peering features are obviously those of a future bookworm, you needn't worry; otherwise, watch out for the spelling of his or her name.

A certain congruity should obtain between a name and even inanimate objects. Nobody would think of calling the *Queen Mary* the "Put-Put," or the Waldorf-Astoria the "Sleeping Bag." In the case of a human being, it seems downright irreverent to call an adopted son of God, a brother of Christ, an heir of heaven, a spotless living member of the mystical body of Christ by a name like "Eucalyptus."

What can a priest do when a parent offers an outlandish name? He can't very well make the baptismal font a fortress and attack with chrism, salt and holy water. Nor can he do much else, since parents are of varied types. There are bobby-soxers with peg-pants and pony-tail, whose faces take on a dreamy look when they hear the smooth syllables of the non-Christian name of their movie idol. The *nouveau riche* is wary of names taken from peasant saints (his local philologist could have told him the aristocracy returned to the simple names thirty years ago). The eccentric's choice of the bizarre may be something of a safety valve.

Once the non-Christian name has wormed its way into the hearts of the parents, the priest might as well

write the situation off as an occupational hazard of clerical life and pray for patience. Perhaps, though, a little piece like this, which parents, actual and potential, can read in the cool of the evening, in the reasonable atmosphere of armchairs and pipe and knitting, may produce some future good.

Americans are rather informal about names, some using your first name almost before the introduction is finished. Yet a certain intimacy, a reserved sacredness properly belongs to our personal name. Our individuality and personality are somehow bound up with it. The surname (a comparatively recent innovation) serves business, strangers, affairs of the market place: things apart from our personal concerns. The Christian name is kept for friendship, courtship, family, religion: the things closest to us. Upon its utterance in the baptismal formula, we began to go to God. At our marriage, we heard the priest repeat it. And as our pilgrimage ends, the open ear of the grave hears the Church speak that Christian name in final, reverent sorrow.

Our Christian name constitutes a public profession of our faith. It is heard by the world and recognized as the uniform of our belief. Visible to all are the bars of the Army officer, the Roman collar of the priest; so, too, should their names be the insignia of Christians. To avoid or hide the Christian name does not indicate deep pride in the faith of our fathers. To the apostolic Catholic, the Christian name symbolizes a glorious heritage of sublime doctrines and heroic deeds; the living memory of confessors, virgins, doctors and martyrs bearing witness to Christ from the catacombs to the Kremlin, to the end of time. In placing our sons and daughters in that endless stream at baptism, we feel rightfully privileged, and we rejoice that for us the doctrine of the communion of saints is pregnant with truth and beauty. The Christian name is not only a public profession, it is a proud profession of faith.

Traditionally, the Catholic places great trust in his patron saint. His "friend at court"—the court of heaven—wields a truly supernatural influence. Friendship with this namesake, so particularly one's own saint, has a happy head-start from the moment of baptism. Intercessory prayer is properly familiar and becomes increasingly pleasant and easy. Here is a loyal protector constantly asking from God the graces that will facilitate our spiritual progress. Triumphant Thomas or Peter brings immortal aid to the still struggling and doubting Thomas or rash Peter. Among the patron saints there is perhaps a holy rivalry over their earth-bound protégés.

All through life the saint provides attractive, powerful example. Those fond hopes for the child, sacred ever to devout parents, are mirrored in the saint whose name he bears. To him is confided the shaping, in character and achievement, of the unfolding life. A big brother or sister in heaven to imitate, an identically



named companion in virtue, fires the young heart to emulation.

Cassandra-like is the lament today on all sides that the world is too much with our children: hampering their studies, impregnating them with materialism, leading them to delinquency. How welcome, then, the good example: Robert Bellarmine for studies; Rose of Lima for purity; Francis of Assisi for detachment. The "Excelsior" of the saint is the voice from the heights to rally our embattled youth. For ascetically alert parents here is a valuable means to inspire, almost effortlessly, an easy piety; an interesting and pleasing means of laying well the Christian groundwork as a young life grows.

Perhaps it is too much to claim that Catholics who abandon the tradition of the Christian name give scandal. Certainly they are in puzzling contrast to fellow Catholics who almost scrupulously give every possible good example in the hope of turning non-Catholics toward the Church. The Church herself makes no secret of her concern over the abandonment of Christian names. She does not even mention a non-Christian name in the baptismal ceremony.

The *Roman Ritual*, our rule book for the liturgy, and the *Code of Canon Law*, our collection of ecclesiastical law, instruct us to name our children in a Christian fashion. It does not seem too much to expect that the intelligent, dutiful Catholic will heed the law of the Church and endeavor "to see that the person baptized receives a Christian name."

FEATURE "X"



Dr. Grosschmid, associate professor of economics at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, offers this brief meditation on the Confessions of St. Augustine and their significance for us today.

THE WRITINGS of the Church Fathers, after having dominated the Christian world for many centuries, have lapsed into undeserved obscurity. Even giants like Saint Jerome or Saint John Damascene emerge in our consciousness only as names, if they emerge at all.

There is only one author of those remote centuries who has not lost his actuality for us and who still draws us to the flaming circle of his mighty intellect: Saint Augustine. The recent occurrence—last November 13—of the sixteenth centenary of his birth gives occasion for a few reflections on this great figure of the Christian West.

Saint Augustine was not the first medieval man;

neither was he, as many have claimed, the first Protestant or the first modern man. Christopher Dawson calls him "a builder of the bridge which was to lead from the old world to the new." He was that, but much more. Saint Augustine, according to Ernst Troeltsch, historian of Christian social origins, "closes and perfects the period of Christian antiquity; he is its last and greatest thinker, the practical applier of its spirit, its tribune of the people."

Like everybody else, Saint Augustine was the child of his age. Yet, like all men of genius, he was not only the child of his age but that of any age. In one respect we are justified in regarding him as a modern man; we feel that he is one of the great writers who are close to us and our times. He created the relationship between psychological experience and literary creation, a relationship unknown before his time.

We have only one of his great works in mind—the *Confessions*. This book is a milestone, not only in the history of literature, but even more strikingly in the history of the soul. With this beautifully written apologia of a Christian convert the introversion of the European soul begins: "Seek for yourself, O man; search for your true self," says Saint Augustine; and indeed it is a sad fate for a man to die too well known to everybody else and still unknown to himself.

The ancient world was not interested in the soul as such; the *Confessions* are the first example of true introspection. Saint Augustine is the first person to see, trembling and dizzy, the infinity of his own soul. "Man is a tremendous depth," he says. "Men go abroad to admire the heights of mountains, the mighty billows of the sea, the broad tides of rivers, the compass of the ocean and the circuits of the stars, and pass themselves by."

He relates his childhood and his worldly and sinful adolescence. Reminiscing, he depicts his youth as a terrible wallowing in the mire of sin; yet most likely it was not any worse than the youth of many another. At the age of nineteen he decides, under the influence of Cicero's *Hortensius*, that he will dedicate his life to the search for wisdom. Soon, however, he discovers that pagan philosophy cannot give him the final certitude he is seeking, and that it teaches only doubt. In his impatient longing he turns to the Manichaean heretics. When he discovers how empty their secrets are, he falls into a melancholic nihilism.

In Milan the sermons of Saint Ambrose (which he at first attends only out of curiosity about their rhetorical form) prepare him for the Christian truth. But he still cannot decide to abandon his love for "mere earthly felicity."

At this point the "inner miracle" takes place; grace touches him. While standing under a tree in his garden, he hears from the house next door the voice of a child chanting: "Take up and read, take up and read." Augustine seizes the Bible, which opens by accident, and his eyes fall on the words of Saint Paul: "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provisions for the flesh, in concupiscence." Augustine

is converted—and there the story of the *Confessions* ends.

The *Confessions*' sweet and glowing African style shows a perfect unity of style and writer—not a lesser literary miracle than the molding of experience and creation. This style, the style of Apuleius and Ter-tullian, is perfectly adapted to express Saint Augustine's stormy leading passion.

This passion, which casts Saint Augustine's sentences into wild waves, is the passion for truth. For him the discovery of the soul is not a goal in itself; he is interested only in the soul as the stage of the search for truth. Anything that happens in the soul is relevant only because it is the road leading to truth. He really hungered and thirsted for the truth. In the *Confessions* the suffering, the almost bodily yearning for truth is evident. Saint Augustine is the eternal

prototype and the heavenly protector of all intellectuals. He wrote about his birthday:

And lo! my infancy died long since, and I live. But Thou, Lord, who for ever livest, and in whom nothing dies: for before the foundation of the worlds, and before all that can be called "before," Thou art, and art God and Lord of all which Thou hast created: in Thee abide, fixed for ever, the first causes of all things unabiding; and of all things changeable, the springs abide in Thee unchangeable.

When Augustine lay dying, his world, the majestic Roman Empire, seemed to be falling about his ears. Internal corruption and external aggression were bringing it to an end. But the Catholic Church lived on, to help a shattered world rebuild from the ruins. Modern man has yet another link with the great Augustine.

GEZA B. GROSSCHMID

Kierkegaard: a Christian protest

Richard M. Brackett, S.J.

Among Søren Kierkegaard's *Journals* entries, written in the last year of his life in the midst of his attack upon the Evangelical Lutheran Church, we find the following notation, a perfect summary of the Danish existentialist's position:

Imagine a great ship . . . Let it have room for one thousand passengers and let everything be arranged on the most convenient, comfortable and luxurious lines . . . It is towards evening. In the stateroom, everything is gay. All is brilliantly illuminated . . . in short, all is joy, mirth and enjoyment. Up on the deck stands the captain: "There is no need for the telescope. I can see it—that little white spot on the horizon. It will be a fearful night."

The captain, nevertheless, joins the passengers in their merriment, is toasted with champagne. No one else sees the white spot on the horizon—no one, except one who sees it and *knows what it is*—but he is only a passenger. He has no authority on the ship. Yet he ventures to warn the captain, who scornfully refuses to listen and continues his enjoyment amidst the clamorous, careless passengers. "It is all the more terrible," concludes Kierkegaard, "when the only one who sees and knows what is toward, is—a passenger. That there is, Christianly speaking, a white spot to be seen on the horizon, which means 'Fearful weather is upon us, threatening us'—this I knew. Alas! but I am and was only a passenger."

Mr. Brackett has long been a student of Scandinavian history and culture.

LITERATURE AND ARTS

Throughout his life, Kierkegaard insisted that he was without authority—yet he was destined to deliver the sharpest and most ironic attack upon Christendom in literary history, an assault upon Christianity as it existed in Protestantism, especially in Denmark.

A century has elapsed since the Danish poet and thinker unleashed his war against the battlements of established Christianity as he knew it. Misunderstood by his own age, which failed to see the white spot on the horizon, Kierkegaard is today a figure of major importance, exerting tremendous influence upon every notable European and American theologian. Only since 1936 have many of Kierkegaard's works appeared in English translation, due mostly to the efforts of David and Lillian Swenson, Alexander Dru and Walter Lowrie.

The past year has witnessed two excellent contributions to the study of the "Danish Pascal." Dr. James Collins, associate professor of philosophy at St. Louis University, has produced in his work, *The Mind of Kierkegaard* (Regnery, 1953), a most expert and brilliant study of Kierkegaard's thought. Reinhold Niebuhr, in his *New York Times* review of Dr. Collins' work, wrote: "Undoubtedly many more books will be written about Kierkegaard than have thus far appeared. But none will be of more value, it is safe to say, than this volume by a young Catholic scholar." An eminent English Kierkegaardian devotee, T. H. Croxall, has rendered a distinct service by his transla-

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tion of Johannes Hohlenberg's interpretative biography of the striking nineteenth-century religious personality (Pantheon, 1954). Hohlenberg, a native of Copenhagen, presents Kierkegaard in all his personal relationships, with a unique mastery of the motives of his literary production on the Danish scene.

Despite his many shortcomings, Kierkegaard does deliver a message, reserved particularly for our times. From a Catholic standpoint, there is the piercing and passionate critique of Luther and the bitter contest with the Danish Lutheran Church. As early as 1519, Luther inveighed against the Epistle of St. James, calling it "an epistle of straw," rejecting its summons to make faith perfect by good works. It is significant that Kierkegaard considered St. James' letter as his "most beloved text" and, in consequence of his doctrine on the necessity of works, entitled one of his books *The Works of Love*. In his early period of literary production, Kierkegaard always spoke with the greatest reverence for Luther, but in his private *Journals* (not published until 1881, twenty-six years after his death) there is evident an increasing dissatisfaction with the Reformer:

There is always with us a worldliness which would have the name of being Christian, but would have it at a price as cheap as possible. This worldliness became observant of Luther. It listened, and it took the precaution to listen a second time for fear that it might have heard amiss, and thereupon it said: "Capital! That suits us exactly. Luther says, 'It is faith alone that matters'; the fact that his life expresses works he does not himself say and now he is dead. Let us then take his word, his doctrine—and we are liberated from all his works. Long live Luther!"

The principal clauses of Christianity—works, existence, witnessing and suffering for the truth, works of love, etc.—were reduced by Luther to subordinate clauses and these, Kierkegaard maintains, must be examined a little more closely, if one wishes to be a true Christian, to be contemporaneous with Christ.

In an equally passionate observation on Luther, Kierkegaard writes:

The closer I examine Luther, the more convinced do I become that he was muddle-headed. It is a comfortable kind of reforming which consists in throwing off burdens and making life easier—that is an easy way of getting one's friends to help. True reforming always means to make life more difficult, to lay on burdens; and the true reformer is therefore always put to death as though he were the enemy of mankind.

Luther's doctrine is not a reversion to primitive Christianity; it is rather a modification and falsification of the true doctrine. To Kierkegaard, a reformer who wants to cast off the yoke of authority is a very doubtful guide. Spiritual existence is by no means an easy task. It is a radical cure which people shrink from—they lack the strength to make the venture. Kierkegaard notes that "every spiritual existence is out on 70,000 fathoms of water." Luther is viewed as accrediting mediocrity, as producing a fundamental confusion

in Christendom, expressing Christianity in the interest of man. Lutheranism is seen as a reaction of mankind against Christianity in God's interest. The reformer is seen as the exact opposite of the apostle, who comes from God, with authority and in His interest. In one concluding and sharp blast, Kierkegaard cries: "The Reformation is rather a concession made to lechery and sensuality."

Early in life, while walking along the lonely moors of Jutland, Kierkegaard meditated upon the present state of Christianity, on the "established order," or, as Mounier prefers to call it, "the established disorder." The sea and the raucous screech of the lonely seagull were singularly apt for suggesting tremendous spiritual suffering. In his *Journals*, Kierkegaard notes that . . .

the heaths of Jutland must of all places be suited to develop the spirit powerfully; here, everything lies naked and uncovered before God and there is no room for the many distractions, the many little crevices where consciousness can hide, where seriousness has such a difficulty in running down one's scattered thoughts.

Kierkegaard was fully prepared for his devastating attack upon the Established Church in 1854-1855. His only complaint was that the engines of the soul "were too great for the hull."

On January 30, 1854, Bishop Mynster died in Copenhagen. A few days later, Professor Martensen characterized the bishop as a true witness to the truth, a link in the sacred chain of witnesses stretching down the ages from the time of the apostles. The alarm was sounded—Kierkegaard's decision was made. He wrote an article entitled, "Was Bishop Mynster a 'Witness to the Truth'?" in which he stated, "A witness (martyr) for the truth is a man whose life from first to last is unacquainted with all that can be called enjoyment." A witness to the truth is from first to last initiated into suffering. He is misjudged, hated, detested, mocked, insulted, laughed to scorn.

Though this article was written in February, 1854, Kierkegaard remained silent until the following December (until Martensen had been duly elected successor to Bishop Mynster), when he published it in the *Fatherland*, pointedly dating it February, 1854. Twenty-one newspaper articles followed between December 18, 1854 and May 26, 1855. Yet the interest of the people was scarcely aroused. Kierkegaard saw that a further step was necessary: he must broaden his attack and extend it to the entire Established Church.

On May 24, 1855, the first issue of the *Instant* appeared. At two-week intervals over a period of five months, nine issues in this series of scathing pamphlets were to be published before Kierkegaard's death. Herein we see the full brunt of his attack upon existing Christianity, as it is discovered in mid-nineteenth-century Denmark. The 1,000 Danish pastors are "royal functionaries," appointed by the state to preach a comfortable form of Christianity. "I, who am called 'either/or,' cannot help anybody with a 'both/and!'"

The New Testament conveys an indescribable horror of "both/and."

The profound influence of *The Imitation of Christ* and other Catholic works found in Kierkegaard's library is evident in these last discourses and pamphlets of the Danish religious thinker. Only in the unchangeableness of God, an aspect of divinity particularly appealing to Kierkegaard, can the true Christian find rest. With the bitterest irony, and in strong language he felt he had to use, Kierkegaard rebuked the ministers of God's word: "This is a grand world to live in, if one only knows how to adapt oneself rightly to it; but Christianity is a *dying to the world*. Your life will give a guarantee that this is all a farce and empty talk."

On his deathbed, Kierkegaard refused the last ministrations of the Lutheran clergy since they were but representatives of the state and had no authority to confer the sacraments. To the end, his was a bitter protest against any such watering down of Christianity.

Unfortunately, busy as he was with his excessive attack upon the Established Church, Kierkegaard did not come in contact with the "corrective" which he needed. The Catholic Church, after a total eclipse of three centuries, was just returning to Denmark, with the ratification of the Danish Constitution on June 5, 1849. In a lecture entitled, "Kierkegaard and Catholicism," Rev. H. Roos, S.J., professor of German Literature at the University of Copenhagen, is most careful to point out that Kierkegaard never knew a *living* Catholicism, either in Denmark or in Berlin. (He never traveled elsewhere.)

Consequently, Kierkegaard was entirely occupied with the individual's solitary meeting with his Saviour God. One looks vainly in his writings for the Catholic classical notion of the *Church*, understood in the sense of the Mystical Body of Christ. Preoccupied with the battle against Hegelianism on the one hand, and weighed down by Kantian prejudices on the other, he was unable to struggle through the barrier of subjectivity to a *living, teaching* Church. His concept of faith as a hazardous venture, a risk in which the individual must first "leap" and only secondarily grasp the proof of Christianity, is a naturally defective concept. With Kierkegaard, personal conviction comes first; the arguments for Christianity are on an inferior level. He observes that "argument is not the basis of faith in the Son of God but conversely, faith in the Son of God is itself the witness. No arguments can confirm one's conviction; on the contrary, conviction confirms the arguments." Accordingly, there is only one proof for Christianity: the *inner* proof; subjectivity is truth. Such intellectual dishonesty can result only in a blindly chosen position on faith; it can never guarantee the factual existence of historical revelation. In dismissing any discussion of proofs for the existence of God, Kierkegaard rejects the very foundation of the Catholic faith, the so-called *praeambula fidei*. In demanding that the individual choose in the equilib-

rium of contradictory possibilities, Kierkegaard is requesting faith in a Being whose existence cannot be demonstrated. Faith, in this sense, is a leap into the dark and is thus irrational.

While one finds in Kierkegaard indications of thought that is Catholic in principle, attitude and object, his deep-rooted subjectivism and anti-intellectualism manifest a trend in the opposite direction.

There is the danger of picking and choosing when one attempts to study the dialectical tenor of Kierkegaard's mind. Dr. Collins wisely remarks that the atheistic existentialists (Sartre, Camus, Heidegger) want a Kierkegaard from whom the sting of living one's life before God and eternity has been removed. The surer course to follow is to accept all he has to offer and attempt a criticism of his beliefs in the light of a comprehensive philosophy and theology which can provide a positive evaluation and preclude the danger of his shortcomings.

Kierkegaard's work has not been in vain. Hohlenberg opines that the writings of the Danish existentialist "have unseen consequences, in the thoughts of his people and in the psychological tension they have created. The spiritual atmosphere in Denmark has been changed. Nothing is as before. Neither is it as it would be if Kierkegaard had not lived."

There is great hope in the fact that the world is interested in Kierkegaard now as never before, at the moment when the danger of being swallowed up in collective systems is more imminent than it has ever been. Today, his work stands before us and posits its either/or. For Kierkegaard, it is a simple choice between the individual and collectivity, between the one and the many, between freedom and thralldom, between Christ and anti-Christ. Though he does not know the "either" wherein lies truth, his "or" does warn modern man of modern error.

A Meadow Moreover

A sound like that of a meadowlark
Poured heaven through the city park,
And though it died false, my memory
Had crept through the notes and fluttered free.
It was off and away where a meadow stands
Out in the clean undeeded lands,
Past time, past even a need of name,
A place where only the children came.
The bobolinks sang where a tall grass sway
Made a green salaam, and the flowers ran gay
Through a moving quilt; wild strawberries bled
Till the thought like the taste was comforted.
And the moss was soft—of a finer class
Than the soft of the friendly ticklegrass.
That free is a child's word none deny—
This, heaven and earth both testify,
But the lark and I have more to say:
That God is a meadow in some high way,
A meadow moreover revealed in ours
Where only the children find the flowers.

JESSICA POWERS

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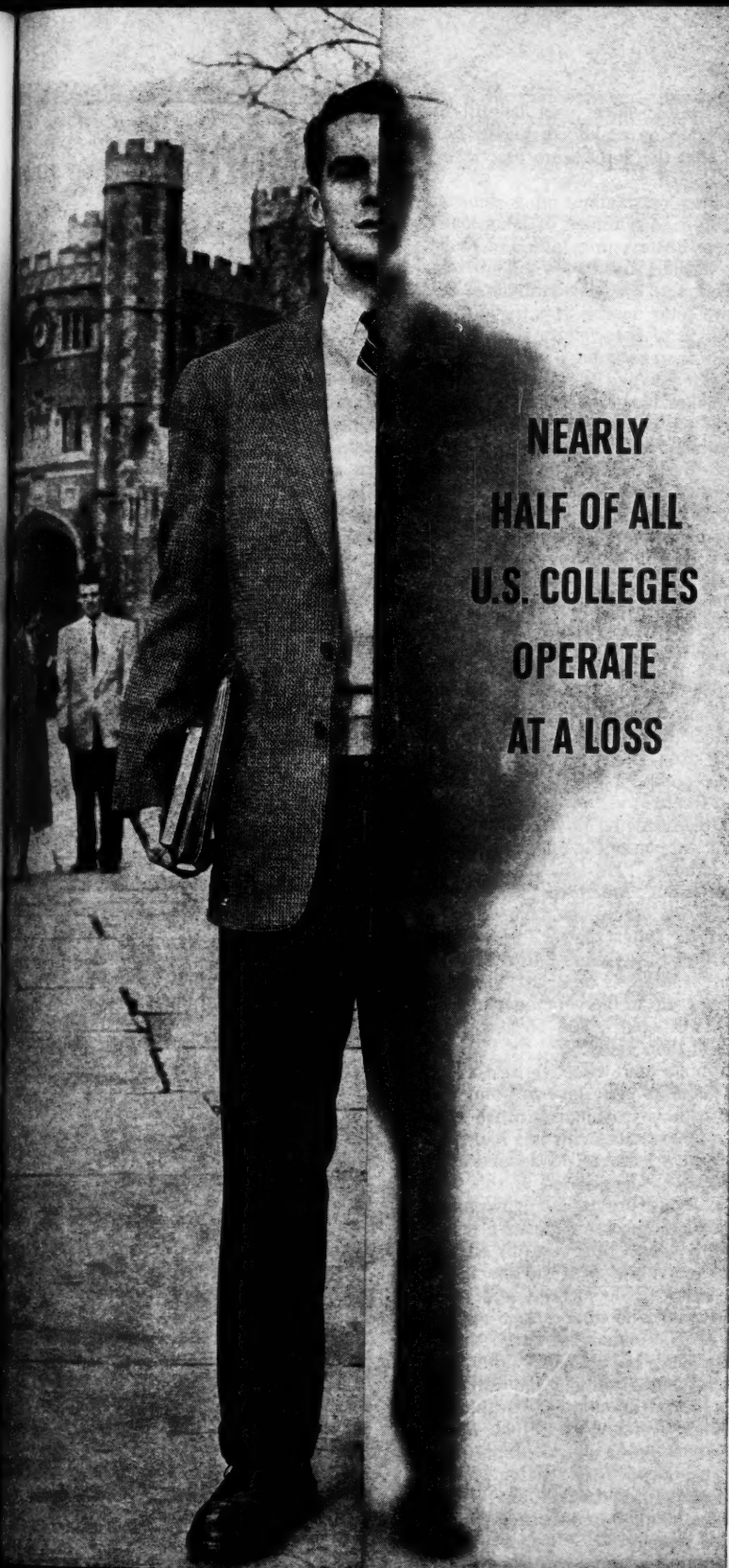
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AS GENERAL ELECTRIC SEES IT . . .

Here's a new way of giving colleges the financial help they need

The G-E Educational Fund announces a plan to match an employee's gifts to his college, up to \$1000 in one year

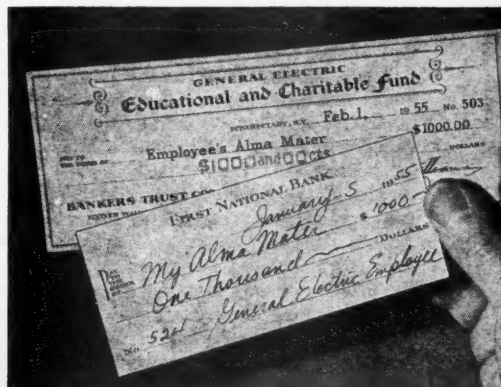
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Splendid social thought

SOCIAL ORIENTATIONS

By Leo C. Brown, S.J., Albert S. Foley, S.J., Mortimer H. Gavin, S.J., Philip S. Land, S.J., William A. Nolan, S.J., John L. Thomas, S.J. Loyola University Press. 680p.

As fine a blend of social science, social history and social ethics as a reader is likely to find comes in this book written by six members of the Institute of Social Order at St. Louis University. The book's title is exact. The work not only gives the most important data and conclusions of several major areas in the social sciences, but it frankly evaluates them in terms of the Catholic concept of man and society. There is nothing excessively dogmatic or a priori in its tone. Basically, it features a shrewd social assessment by which the authors hope "to supply sufficient information about the social world in which we live, so that discussion of papal social programs can come to grips with reality."

The seven sections of the book deal with the family, making a living, labor-management relations, social security, the theory and practice of communism, government and citizenship, and minorities in American society. A final short chapter summarizes papal social teaching under the heading, "The Church and Social Order."

The introductory section on the family is alone worth the price of the book. A real gem of succinct presentation, it gives an historical and statistical picture of the family in the United States and neglects none of the data of recent social research in dealing with courtship, success and failure in marriage, divorce and the wider problems of population connected with the family. A lucid treatment of the theories of cultural relativity which confuse the minds of so many moderns in their thinking on morals in family life, puts us very much in the author's debt.

The sections which treat of economic institutions give a firm defense of the prosperous industrial life of America against the ambiguous charge of materialism. Laissez-faire is analyzed in the light of industrial history and present trends. The authors explain with impressive clarity the need for increased social control as the economy grows more complex. At the same time they lay down principles for the limitation of liberty-destroying government power. Some comment on the applicability to the American scene of repeated statements by Pius XII about the depersonalizing effect of the bureaucratic and technological emphasis in modern

society would have been helpful in this section on making a living. But about that the authors are practically silent.

Another outstanding job is done in the 100-page synthesis of labor-management history, principles and problems. Social security is adequately handled, with brief descriptions of the welfare setup in this country and an evaluation of the welfare state.

The average college student will have already had a course in civics that makes him familiar with a good deal of the content of the section on government and citizenship.

The lively section on the theory and practice of communism covers over 75 pages of the book. The outlining of the various sources of information and the techniques of identifying and exposing communist subversives is practical instruction. Many people believe, however, that effective anticommunism is not solely a matter of digging out subversives, laudable and necessary though that be. Some readers will feel that there is a lack of balance in the treatment of the struggle against communism.

The author mars his argument by a too frequent use of epithets such as "muddle-headed liberals," "befuddled," "appeasers," "apologetic-minded Catholics." He issues warnings to "complacent Americans." At times melodrama seems to take over, as when he states that we can expect "our own fuzzy-minded liberals to remain smiling—somewhat vacuously perhaps—up to the very moment when an MVD agent's gun crashes at the back of their necks."

A much more effective case against the "liberals" who give aid and comfort to the Communist cause could have been made with less name-calling and a sedulous avoidance of exaggeration. Comparison of the shaky Menshevik provisional government, immediate successor to an absolutist tyranny over a Russia hardly emerged from feudalism, with the liberal wing of American democracy, and of the Bolsheviks who turned them out with the U. S. Communist Party, may be sensational, but it hardly adds to the careful understanding requisite for a true "social orientation." Readers can profitably refer to Rev. John F. Cronin's book *Problems and Opportunities in a Democracy* (Mentzer-Bush, Chicago, 1954) to see how this topic can be handled in a thorough yet dignified manner.

A more adequate treatment of the concepts of "culture" and "ethnocentrism" would have enhanced the value of the very useful survey of minority problems in the United States. But again we have an excellent summary of the contemporary facts necessary

BOOKS

for an informed social and moral judgment on racial tensions.

We do not know if faint praise always implies damnation but it seems it would have been better to omit all reference to the problems of the international common good than to have written the faint praise of efforts at international collaboration found in a few paragraphs at the end of the chapter on "The Citizen and the Federal Government." Whatever the reason, the noticeable absence of treatment of world social problems in a book that states as its purpose the "understanding of major problem areas and current social thought . . . expected of the average college graduate," is a serious lacuna.

Even so, we should not belabor a book for what isn't in it, when most of what is there is so eminently worthwhile.

GORDON GEORGE

Homo Sapiens in perspective

THE STORY OF MAN

By Carleton S. Coon. Knopf. 437p. \$6.75.

The author of this book is well known among biologists who are interested in matters of race and human evolution. The present work adds to his stature and demonstrates that he is a gifted writer who can make technical matters clear and interesting.

The book attempts to give the whole history of the human species from the earliest records of man as man to the present age of bursting atoms. The author's method is best given in his own words: "I shall approach history with the tools of an anthropologist: human biology, archaeology and the study of living cultures, particularly those of 'primitive' man."

The chapter on "The Earliest Men" provides a jumping-off place for the narrative. Dr. Coon repeatedly emphasizes man's uniqueness in nature. He shows that the old view which held that man descended from apes cannot face the test of facts. When man first appeared on earth, he possessed a combination of features which no other animal ever had: erect posture, free-moving arms and hands, sharp-focusing eyes, a brain capable of fine judgment and decision, as well as keen perception, and the unique power of speech.

Man's unique qualities cannot be ignored without distorting the pages

of biology and history: "Of all the creatures, only man has hands exclusively devoted to work, to signaling, to folding in prayer, and to the hundreds of other things he does with them." Man's hands are particularly wonderful as functional instruments:

If the finest of contemporary engineers were to sit down for weeks to design a perfect tool for grasping and for fine manipulation, they could come out with nothing better than the human hand.

The author showers us with a wealth of observations which show that *homo sapiens* has always occupied a peculiar position apart from all other animal species. For example: "Subhuman primates, like other animals, drink where the water flows. Only man carries it to where he lives." The use of fire is a critical difference between man and all other animals. It seems worthwhile to belabor this point a little, since so much nonsense has been written in our times in an attempt to tear down the uniqueness of man in nature and to equate him with the beast. Dr. Coon's factual presentation of the picture is welcome relief.

During the history of evolutionary theory, modern man has been held to descend from a variety of fossil men. The present status of our anthropological knowledge, however, supports no clear pattern of evolutionary succession among fossil men. *Homo sapiens* was contemporary with them all, including Neanderthal man, who is often shown in museums as an ancestor of modern man. Even more interesting is the fact that the earliest of all known tools are associated with *homo sapiens*.

Dr. Coon points out that after the Nazi racial atrocities became known to the world, an anti-rational attitude toward race became prevalent. It was considered immoral to study race; book after book exposed the "myth" of race; extremists even tried to blot the word "race" from the language and attempted to substitute the vague and useless term "ethnic group." The fact that sinful men misused racial concepts to further their evil purposes paralyzed the minds of many scholars, notably the minds of social anthropologists. As Dr. Coon so aptly puts it: "Their prudery about race was equaled only by their horror of Victorian prudery about sex."

I liked this book. I am sure that the general reader will enjoy it and will profit from the reading. The facts presented are sound, and speculations are labeled as such. The author avoids extreme views and tends to follow the *via media* in his historical evaluations. There is an excellent glossary at the end and the index is complete. The

superb illustrations are original and are reproduced with beautiful quality and clarity. The binding and printing make this an esthetically pleasing volume.

CHARLES G. WILBER

THE WORD

But He asked them, What reason had you to search for Me? Could you not tell that I must needs be in the place which belongs to My Father? These words which He spoke to them were beyond their understanding (Luke 2:49-50; Gospel for Sunday in the Octave of the Epiphany).

This much may be said about the loss in Jerusalem and the finding in the Temple of the boy Christ: if the fact were not recorded by the infallible Holy Spirit in the inspired Gospel text, most of us would flatly refuse to believe that the incident ever took place at all. The various events of our Lord's life are traditionally and conventionally referred to as *mysteries*. The mystery of the finding in the Temple is a whacking, stunning mystery in the commonest sense of that word.

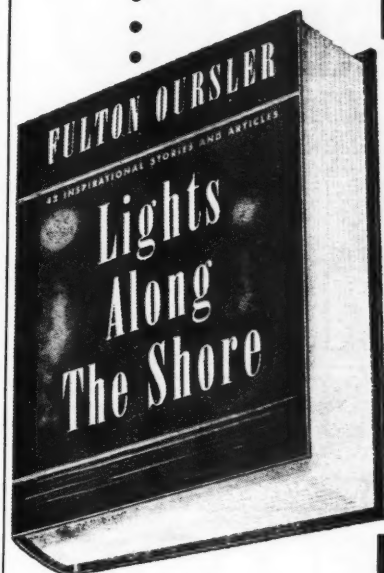
It is not difficult to list the factors which make this particular mystery so mysterious. To begin with, absolutely nothing in the first twelve years of our Saviour's life prepares us (or, apparently, prepared His Mother) in any way for this abrupt declaration of His complete independence of all human authority. On the contrary; it must be remembered that our Lord's perfect obedience to Mary and Joseph both before and after this startling affair stands in odd contradiction to it.

Next, our divine Lord knew quite well that His sudden, prolonged and unexplained disappearance would simply lacerate His Mother's gentle heart. One single word or the slightest stray hint in advance might have saved Mary from the worst of her terrified anguish. The boy Christ said nothing, implied nothing, hinted nothing. He simply vanished, and in some way that would go wholly unnoticed.

Possibly from a high point on Mount Sion our young Saviour stood with dry eyes and watched as the caravan that thought it was His wound its slow way along the road to the north until it disappeared in a cloud of dust. No doubt He thought about how His Mother would feel that night and next day and the following night and yet the third morning. He knew how she would feel.

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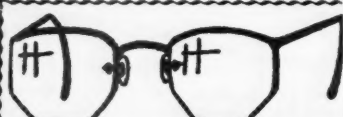
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man speech be more completely astounding and incredible than the calm, somewhat surprised answer which the boy Christ made to His Mother's so just, so human, so heart-rending cry, *My Son, why hast Thou treated us so?* Our Lord asks coolly, *What reason had you to search for Me?* Almost desperately, and in spite of his loyal self, the most devoted follower of Christ finds himself thinking: "Was there ever such a question from a boy to his mother as the baffling question of this divine Boy to His peerless Mother?"

Let us recall now a most fundamental truth of the Christian way of life. The mortal life of God-made-man is the literal model, the strict prototype, for the life of every true Christian. It must not be that any follower of Christ should ever be able to say, as he heroically meets and defeats some most cruel crisis in his life: "Well, God-made-man never had His Heart torn in just this awful way."

The grievous fact is that at certain rare moments a Christian can truly put God first in his life only by breaking a heart that is most dear to him; thus, of course, breaking his own heart. Neither mother nor father nor sister nor brother nor the girl I might have loved must come between me and my God.

Maybe the mystery of the loss and the finding is not meant to be understood by everyone. Not everyone has to live this mystery.

VINCENT P. MCCORRY, S.J.

THEATRE

POST MORTEM REPORT. Graham Greene's *The Living Room* was accorded a favorable reception in London and evoked enthusiastic praise in Paris. In New York the play closed in less than a month. Our first-string critics, bending over backward to be fair, gave the drama equivocal indorsement—a contributing cause of its premature demise at the Henry Miller box office.

The play that was a success in sophisticated Old World capitals was a failure in New York. Why? The answer goes deeper than differences in culture, taste and degree of sophistication. All three cities are sophisticated in the general meaning of the word—London and Paris comparing with a cosmopolite of fifty while New York's sophistication resembles that of a sophomore who has recently read Huxley and *The Revolt of the*

Angels. In culture, London and New York are closer than London and Paris, considering the language barrier. Still, *The Living Room* was acclaimed in both cities across the Atlantic while on our side it was given only polite applause, most of it for the actors rather than the play.

What made the play a failure in New York, in your observer's opinion, is recognition of sin. In the contemporary New York theatre, sin is an almost forbidden word, rarely mentioned except in mockery. In *The Living Room* sin is not treated as a joke. A specific sin, adultery, is given a close study, its nature and consequences examined, as under a microscope, against a background of Christian morals.

A Catholic girl falls in love with a non-Catholic married man. For the man divorce, which his wife will not grant, would be a desirable solution. Divorce would not help the girl, of course; but she is so infatuated that she is willing to go along with the idea. "I will make a deathbed confession," she mockingly tells her uncle, a priest, "and die in the odor of sanctity."

The sin of pride is usually associated with maturity, especially with persons holding high position. The virus often attacks the young, however, and it is obvious that this girl has a serious infection. She demands that her personal happiness be given the green light over all other considerations—and she wants it now, in this world.

What has happened to the girl, of course, is that she has been seduced by the modern fallacy that worldly happiness is the goal of life—an idea which is patently ridiculous. Worldly happiness is unattainable, except in intermittent spells, because too many men often want the same woman, too many women want the same hat and too many small fry want Christmas every week. Those who come closest to happiness are saints, religious and artists, who live largely in the spirit.

The best-known way not to find happiness is to look for it. Saints are so absorbed in seeking ultimate truth, and priests and nuns, especially in the missionary field, are so dedicated to serving their fellow men, that they have neither the time nor inclination to pursue worldly happiness. Still, a higher order of happiness comes to them as a by-product of their work or dedication.

Greene's leading character is probably too young to have learned that it's useless to go gallivanting outside the Church looking for happiness, that happiness looks for those who deserve it. Her faith gives her assurance of

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eternal felicity, with frequent fore-
tastes while she is earthbound. She
prefers, however, to swap her Chris-
tian heritage for a mess of sensual
pleasure, only to find that her stolen
pleasure adds up to a handful of
ashes.

Although the girl is outwardly in-
tractable and rebellious, it is clear
that she cannot escape a gnawing
sense of guilt. She defends her liaison
in a brassy voice, as if trying to con-
vince others, without herself being
fully convinced, that her dalliance is
defensible. Her split loyalty, divided
between her love and her Catholic
training, is probably what puzzled the
majority of New York critics, who
kept themselves off the hook by writ-
ing neutral reviews. The critics who
lauded *The Voice of the Turtle* and
A Streetcar Named Desire, and the
sex-conditioned theatregoers who
made the plays phenomenal hits, can
hardly be expected to understand why
so much fuss should be made over a
little illicit love.

While *The Living Room* is virile
drama, it is not without structural
flaws as a play. Greene's characters
are natural as life, but they never
clash in a clearly defined crisis that
changes the trend of the story for
better or worse. Instead of character
in conflict Greene gives us character
in travail. The action runs downhill
all the way.

This, of course, is not true tragedy.
In *The Living Room*, no noble spirit
is frustrated or defeated either by
stronger or more cunning powers from
without or by obscure flaws of char-
acter from within. But it is powerful
drama that has a similar cathartic ef-
fect. It contrasts modern sophistries
with the counsel of faith in a way
that has almost the simple clarity of
a morality play. It inquires into the
nature of durable happiness and sifts
the gold from the tinsel. This sort of
purgative drama is too strong for an
audience accustomed to such pap as
One Bright Day.

THEOPHILUS LEWIS

FILMS

THE SILVER CHALICE is a 2-hour-
and-20-minute WarnerColored, Cine-
maScope version of Thomas Costain's
king-size, best-selling fictional embel-
lishment of New Testament material.
It was produced and directed by Vic-
tor Saville, who was able to undertake
the task only by temporarily relinquish-
ing active supervision of the filming of

Mickey Spillane series, to the screen
rights of which he holds title. This is
an unkind and perhaps irrelevant ob-
servation, because Saville has, in the
past, been associated with some com-
paratively distinguished screen efforts.
It does not necessarily account for
the fact that *The Silver Chalice* is a
bad movie. However, it does furnish
a provocative example of the strange
combinations of subjects which stem
from a philosophy of moviemaking
geared to "giving the public what it
wants."

What makes *The Silver Chalice* a
disappointing movie for adults is that
it is a sprawling and extremely plotty
tale which seldom if ever comes to
life. Theoretically it is concerned with
the wild and ultimately edifying story
of a young artisan (indifferently
played by newcomer Paul Newman)
who is commissioned to execute a
chalice to hold the cup used by Christ
at the Last Supper. In practice, more
of the film revolves around the
machinations of a pseudo-religious
charlatan (Jack Palance) with sup-
plementary attention devoted to a
good girl (Pier Angeli), a bad girl
(Virginia Mayo), an assortment of
Christians, Romans and Jewish ex-
tremists, an extraordinary amount of
traveling by the whole cast and the
handsome and original but self-de-
featingly distracting sets by stage de-
signer Rolf Gerard. (Warner)

**20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE
SEA** is another of Walt Disney's skil-
ful and affectionate live-action screen
treatments of a juvenile classic. While
his earlier live-action films have most-
ly dealt with romanticized history,
this one, dressed up in Technicolor
and CinemaScope, is based on Jules
Verne's granddaddy of all science-
fiction stories—a literary form which

is enjoying renewed popularity at the
moment.

Actually Earl Felton's screen play
adds considerable embroidery to the
original Jules Verne narrative. Ac-
cording to Verne, a mysterious and
terrifying sea monster was sighted by
a number of ships immediately after
the Civil War. In the movie the effect
is more lethal: the monster sank the
ships. And when the French scientist
(Paul Lukas), his assistant (Peter
Lorre) and a sailor (Kirk Douglas),
part of an expedition sent to inves-
tigate, find themselves aboard the
monster (a futuristic submarine) they
encounter a vengeful Captain Nemo
(James Mason) whose motives for
withdrawing from the human race
are quite different from those en-
visaged by Verne.

For screen purposes Nemo is a
scientific genius who has discovered
a source of unlimited power (sus-
piciously resembling atomic energy)
and has been subjected to great suf-
fering because of his refusal to turn
the secret over to the unspecified war-
like nation of his birth. In retaliation,
he and his crew of fellow sufferers
have built the submarine and are
waging extra-legal warfare on muni-
tions makers in particular and man's
inhumanity to man in general.

This dated conception of interna-
tional villainy fits rather well into
the picture's period and is not in-
consistent with the original source
material. The marine special effects
—the weird and frightening spectacle
of the attacking submarine, its elec-
trifying sail through an underwater
passage and the epic battle with the
giant squid—are thrilling and beauti-
fully executed. Altogether the film is
lots of fun for young and old alike.

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CORRESPONDENCE

"Integrating" the Navajos

EDITOR: The U. S. Government is at last making a determined effort to keep its pledges to the Navajo Indians in the matter of education.

Unfortunately, however, some of the methods being used do not meet the standards of sound sociology. Children from the vast reservation in northern Arizona, even those in the early grades, are taken from their homes and communities and sent to school in Winslow, Ariz., two hundred miles away. Early in November, for example, 27 children—second and third-graders—were taken from their homes near San Isabel Mission, Lukachukai, Ariz., to the distant boarding school.

That would be the equivalent, for New York youngsters, of a journey to Rutland, Vt., and for Washington youngsters of a journey to Tarboro, N. C.

The alleged purpose of the boarding-school policy is to help integrate the Navajo children into white civilization. Yet in Winslow the Navajo children do not go to school with Caucasian youngsters.

Nor do the facilities at Winslow warrant such a long trip. The Indian school there will have to be enlarged to accommodate the influx. It is difficult to see why schools at Lukachukai, Chin-Lee and other Navajo communities cannot be enlarged, so that family life be not disrupted.

(REV.) WILLIAM B. FAHERTY, S.J.
Denver, Colo.

Japan and Gatt

EDITOR: Fr. Kearney ably depicted (AM. 11/20) the precarious state of Japan's economy. I agree that the free world has a definite responsibility to alleviate Japan's plight by providing more adequate markets. Yet the statement that "prudence would indicate that Britain drop her long-standing opposition" to Japanese membership in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (Gatt) does not indicate sufficient appreciation of the realities of British politics.

Labor and Conservatives alike are conscious of the precarious state of the Lancashire textile industry, which depends for its continued slovenly existence upon the maintenance of markets into which the Japanese would cut deeply. I do not see how Britain can support Japan's entry into Gatt without weakening her own economy.

The main British objection to Jap-

anese competition lies in the wage differentials between Japanese and British workers. The British do not trust the Japanese trade-union movement to be able to raise wages sufficiently to affect the present differential. If the Japanese unions were to win wage rates comparable to the British, their products would be priced out of both domestic and foreign markets. EDWARD R. O'CONNOR

St. Louis, Missouri

Group medical insurance

EDITOR: The discussion between Dr. Hollis and Fr. George on group medical insurance highlights on one of the most disturbing and challenging weaknesses in contemporary medical practice. Without group insurance, I am afraid, millions of low-income families would be left out in the cold.

Unable to afford Blue Cross or Blue Shield insurance, at least two-thirds of my own people are deprived of essential medical care. Even if group insurance implied inferior medical care, such care is certainly preferable to no care at all. These hard-working people with their large families are entitled to adequate medical and dental care. Let's give it to them, not five or ten years hence, but now.

(REV.) ULRIC J. PROELLER
Blumenfeld, N. D.

Missionary's plea

EDITOR: More than one missionary in a foreign land has recalled, with deep feeling, the famous letter of Saint Francis Xavier in which he said that he often felt strongly moved to descend upon the universities of Europe, and to cry aloud like a madman in behalf of "the multitudes out here who fail to become Christians only because there is nobody prepared for the holy task of instructing them."

The missionary today sees this very same situation, and shares the same intense feeling expressed by Saint Francis. If we cannot have enough missionaries to help in the harvest, at least we might have enough catechists . . . if only sufficient funds were forthcoming for their support.

Many good Catholics ask St. Francis Xavier for favors, especially at times like the Novena of Grace. Perhaps some one would be so kind as to answer his plea in behalf of "the multitudes out here."

(REV.) E. HILLMAN, C.S.Sp.
Catholic Mission, Arusha
Tanganyika Territory, East Africa

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